



COVID-19 Epidemic. The Group is moving fast with technological and organisational answers to protect the local communities of which it forms an essential part.

The Bank has taken a series of operational measures. In just a few days it has installed 10,000 smartworking workstations, reduced working hours and shifts in branches and it has introduced new processes such as remote acceptance of moratorium and contract applications. It has made sure staff have prevention kits and has adopted stringent prevention measures

Milan 20th March – The health crisis generated by the spread of the COVID-19 virus and the succession of restrictive measures taken by the government to protect the health of the public has had a strong impact on how the Bank operates and changes have been made to ensure it continues to operate, while at the same time maximum care and attention is paid to protect the health of employees and customers.

“We are facing a situation without precedent which requires dedication and an ability to find the best answers which combine responsibility for providing an essential service with maximum rigour in the defence of the health of all,” **said Victor Massiah, Chief Executive Officer at UBI Banca.**

The largest branches (383) will remain open to the public in the morning only to provide minimum essential services, especially for the most disadvantaged. The number of staff on duty, however, is reduced and they have been divided into two shifts which alternate in order to reduce their travel and presence in offices. Medium to small-size branches (912) are open to the public until 1.30 p.m. and no staff are present in the afternoon. Mini-branches and “light branches” (238) have been closed in order to increase the number of teams working in larger branches and allow staff to work shifts less frequently.

These measures and the flexibility that has been adopted, which includes granting special leave, mean that **over 50% of staff** are not travelling to work and/or are working remotely, which reduces travel and circulation.

This is giving a real boost to **smart working**. UBI Banca has allowed its staff to work remotely since as early as 2017. On 20th February 2020, and therefore just before the crisis began, smart working workstations operating on a daily basis numbered around **800**, while **now they number around 10,000**. Since 24th February, when the first restrictive measures were taken by the government, UBI Banca has invited all its employees to take the opportunity to work from home. This invitation was addressed immediately and on a large scale to staff working at central headquarters and then later to staff in the branch network.



At present a series of stringent measures have been adopted inside branches, where customers are allowed to enter only for matters that are really necessary and cannot be deferred and in any case the number of customers allowed to enter cannot be greater than the number of employees present in the branch. Together with keeping a social distance of two metres, all possible personal protection measures have been taken, dependent, amongst other things, on the limited availability of resources. These are to protect both staff and customers and now include the installation of thermal scanners to detect high temperatures and light-weight mobile screens to ensure social distances and safety measures are enforced.

*“At a time of particular difficulty for the local communities in which we have our roots, the Bank must make maximum effort and show total dedication to serve the communities that have been hit and of which UBI forms an essential part. We are demonstrating that we can make a contribution to overcome this grave crisis that the country is going through, by bringing every answer and every effort into play to confirm UBI’s ability to **“bank honestly and fairly”**, Victor Massiah added.*

The Bank is now organised to help customers at this time of crisis so that service is guaranteed by all the available remote technology and with all the assistance necessary.

The limited presence of staff in the afternoons has made it possible to launch a series of customer caring activities. In recent weeks UB has launched a **“keeping in contact initiative”** where all customers are progressively contacted, with no commercial aim, in order to understand their needs and to care for customer relationships in this critical period. Efforts to manage moratorium applications are also very intense due to the large numbers that have been received, partly due to the ability to send both the moratoriums themselves and the majority of loan agreements (not secured) remotely via certified electronic mail and UBIBox.

For further information please contact:

UBI Banca - Media relations – Tel. +39 027781 4213 - 4938 – 4936

Email: media.relations@ubibanca.it

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